

News Release
Public Information Office

**For Immediate Release:
November 28, 2001**

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Police Chief Al Philippus to Retire

City Manager Terry Brechtel today announced the retirement of Police Chief Al A. Philippus effective April 1, 2002.

"Al has built a wonderful partnership between our citizens and police officers," Brechtel said at a news conference today. "His leadership has ensured a safer community and his accomplishments have brought national recognition to the department. He will be missed."

Philippus, 50, will retire after 27 years of service in the San Antonio Police Department, the last seven as Chief of Police. In that position he manages 2,913 sworn and civilian members within the department, with an annual budget of \$237 million.

"I have given much thought to the timing of this announcement, especially given the current national events. But I have come to the conclusion there will never be a better time than now," Philippus said.

"I am confident of the plans we have developed over the years for current operations as well as an array of comprehensive contingency plans that we have to cover virtually every situation," Philippus added. "These plans have been developed collectively by my excellent management team who are prepared to carry out the mission of the Police Department regardless of who is serving as Chief."

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Under his guidance, the department enhanced educational levels for sworn personnel and instituted programs that made the San Antonio Police Department one of the most professional in the nation. This was exhibited when the department received the highly prestigious accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) in March 1999, and the National League of Cities First Place Award for “Excellence in Community Policing” in 1998.

As police chief, Philippus developed the Management Accountability Program (MAP). “The MAP Program brought the City’s efforts at crime-fighting to what I would liken to the military’s use of smart bombs meaning that he identified specific crime-related problem areas and then mobilized resources to eradicate the problem,” Brechtel said.

Philippus was instrumental in launching Project SAFFE (San Antonio Fear Free Environment) which is the largest community policing effort in the department aimed at creating safer neighborhoods, and developing a number of innovative initiatives that resulted in one of the most significant decreases in crime in the city’s history. He also directed the decentralization of police services to enhance customer service as well as the expansion of Cellular on Patrol into all police substations. Additionally, he implemented state of the art technology enhancements to improve on the efficiency and effectiveness of police services.

Before he was Chief, he spearheaded the development of several initiatives including the Gang Unit, the Violent Crimes Task Force, Family Assistance Crisis Teams, bicycle patrols and the civilianization of certain police functions which resulted in savings and increased patrol presence on the street.

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“Being part of this department has been one of my lifelong loves. San Antonio is also my home and where my family and I will hopefully make our home for the remainder of my life,” he said. “I will continue to be involved in our community, no matter what I may be doing in the future. It is a community that has stood by the department during times of celebration and times of tears, through times of triumph and periods of adversity. I will always be proud to be a part of this community.”